

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 19, 2014

Yvan Mainini
President
International Basketball Federation/
Fédération Internationale de Basketball
Route Suisse 5
1295 Mies – Switzerland

Dear President Mainini,

We are concerned about recent reports indicating that Sikhs are not able to participate in International Basketball Federation (FIBA) games while wearing a turban, which is essential to their faith, and ask you to change this discriminatory policy.

We understand that Sikh players participating within FIBA were told that their turbans violate Article 4.4.2 of FIBA's official rules, which states that "Players shall not wear equipment (objects) that may cause injury to other players."

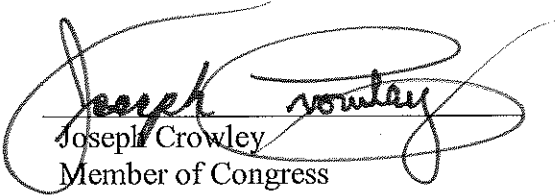
There is no evidence showing that a turban has been dangerous during basketball games or other popular sports events. In fact, there are many examples of Sikhs who have safely competed in basketball at many levels with their articles of faith intact. For example, Darsh Preet Singh served as captain for the basketball team at Trinity University, maintaining his turban throughout a successful career in the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Mr. Singh has become a model of success for Sikhs across America and the world, and has shown that a Sikh turban neither hinders nor endangers NCAA competitors.

Additionally, Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) recently changed its policies to permit Sikhs to wear turbans while playing soccer. Secretary General Jerome Valcke said in announcing the decision: "You cannot have discrimination."

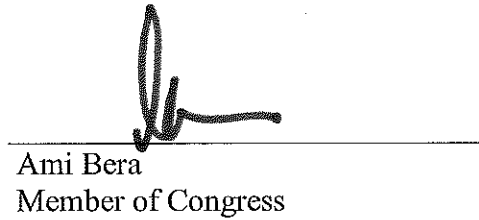
Basketball is a beloved team sport that has the ability to bring people of all backgrounds together, regardless of history, culture, language, and religion. In addition to becoming one of the most popular sports in many countries, basketball has come to exemplify how those of diverse backgrounds can communicate, coordinate, and work together in pursuit of a shared goal. We believe that makes the basketball court the perfect venue to showcase the diversity of our world and the ways in which sports bring people together.

We hope that you will carefully re-examine the existing policy with respect to Sikh turbans and support a change when FIBA's Central Board next meets. We look forward to hearing from you on this matter.

Sincerely,



Joseph Crowley
Member of Congress



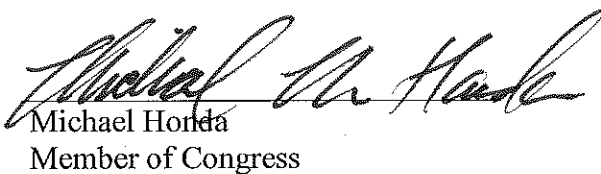
Ami Bera
Member of Congress



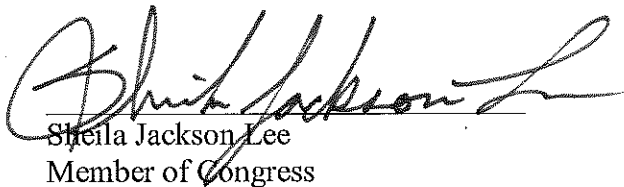
Grace Meng
Member of Congress



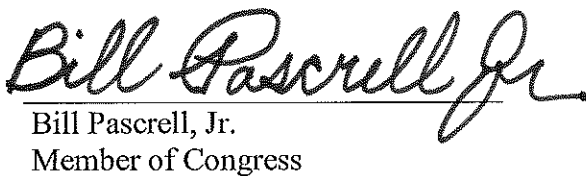
Gary Peters
Member of Congress



Michael Honda
Member of Congress



Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



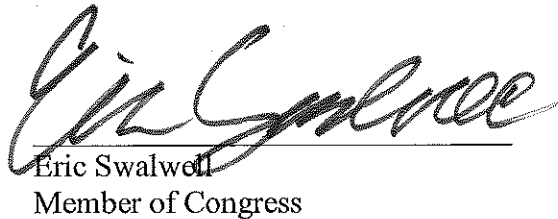
Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



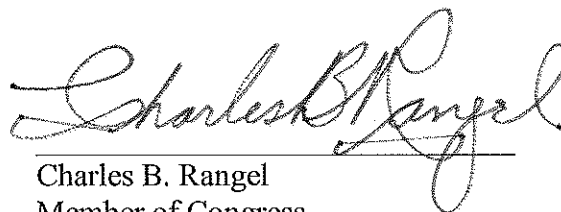
Donna F. Edwards
Member of Congress



Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



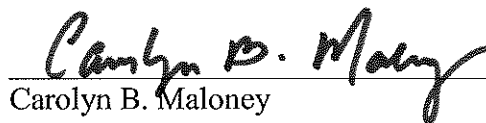
Barbara Lee
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Charles B. Rangel
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Mark Takano
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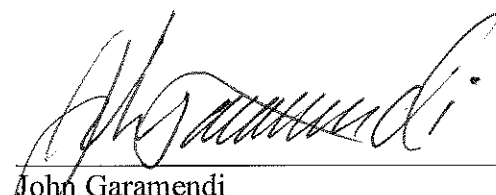
Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress



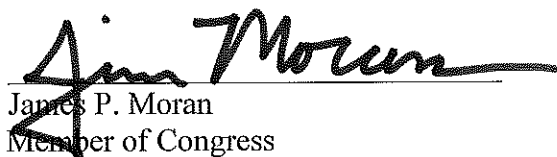
Suzan DelBene
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Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



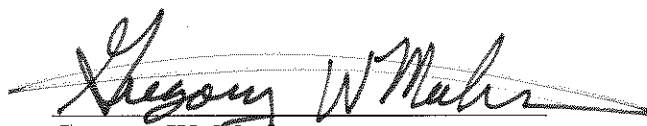
John Garamendi
Member of Congress



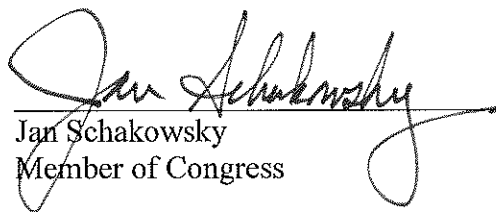
James P. Moran
Member of Congress



Eliot L. Engel
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Gregory W. Meeks
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Jan Schakowsky
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